

THE RUSSIAN REVIEW



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Past and Present*

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New Light on Lenin, <i>David Shub</i>	131
Claims and Realities of Soviet Socialism, <i>George C. Guins</i>	138
The Tragedy of the Cosmopolite Tairov, <i>Gregor Aronson</i>	148
A Reactionary Liberal: M. N. Katkov, <i>Marc Raeff</i>	157

BOOK REVIEWS

The Jews in the Soviet Union, <i>by Solomon M. Schwarz, Samson Soloveitchik</i>	168
Soviet Attitudes Toward Authority, <i>by Margaret Mead, Vladimir Petrov</i>	171
A Dollar Index of Soviet Machinery Output, 1927/28 to 1937, <i>by Alexander Gerschenkron, Holland Hunter</i>	173
The Russian-American Company, <i>by S. B. Okun, tr. by C. Ginsburg, Igor N. Belousovitch</i>	174

Continued on Page II

Saint Tikhon Zadonsky, Inspirer of Dostoevsky, by Nadejda Gorodetzky, <i>Marthe Blinoff</i>	175
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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books, Pamphlets, and Articles on Russia Published in 1951, <i>Virginia Close and Evelyn Hansen</i>	177
Letter to the Editor	196
<i>Errata</i>	197

THE RUSSIAN REVIEW

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The aim of "The Russian Review" is to present a non-partisan interpretation of Russian history, civilization, and culture. The Review invites contributions by authors of divergent views, but the opinions expressed in any individual article in this journal are not necessarily those of the editors.

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New Light on Lenin

BY DAVID SHUB

THE final—thirty-fifth—volume of Lenin's *Collected Works* has now appeared in Moscow.¹ The first edition, in twenty-two volumes, appeared in Russia while Lenin was still alive, under the editorship of Leo Kamenev, the veteran Bolshevik who was executed in 1936. A few years after Lenin's death, came a second edition of twenty-eight volumes, edited by Bukharin, Molotov, and Stepanov-Skvortsov. That edition included Lenin's articles, speeches, a large part of his letters, together with extensive editorial notes containing a great deal of important bibliographical and biographical material. In the early 30's, a third edition appeared. Bukharin was no longer one of the editors, but the edition was nevertheless almost a duplicate of the second.

The present edition differs sharply from its predecessors. Despite its thirty-five volumes, it is far from complete. The last volume ends, significantly, in 1922, although Lenin did not die until January 21, 1924. It is true that Lenin was very ill during the last year of his life, but there were periods when he was well enough to write articles, to correspond with his closest collaborators, to prepare a major address for the 1923 Party Congress. Why does the new "complete" edition fail to include a single letter or manuscript of the year 1923? The reason is that it was precisely in 1923 that Lenin's relations with Stalin deteriorated gravely. It was then (December 1922-January 1923) that Lenin wrote his famous testament urging the removal of Stalin as General Secretary of the Communist Party. This he followed with sharp attacks on Stalin's policy in Georgia and his conduct as Commissar of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. One of the last known of Lenin's writings is a curt note breaking off all relations with Stalin. None of these attacks on Stalin appear in this edition.

The new edition no longer contains extensive notes. The notations are brief and full of blatant falsifications, aimed at conveying the impression that in all critical situations during Lenin's lifetime, Stalin was always the man who saved the day.

Despite these faults and omissions, the last two volumes—thirty-

¹State Publishing House of Political Literature, 1951.

four and thirty-five—are very valuable. They contain Lenin's letters (although some which appeared in the earlier editions are missing), his telegrams, and brief notes to his aides. The most striking single fact is that among nearly 500 letters, covering the period of 1895 to 1922, *there is not a single letter to Stalin*. Stalin joined the Bolshevik faction shortly after the 1903 split of the Social Democratic Party. Stalinist historians and the official Communist press of the past fifteen years continue to claim that Lenin and Stalin built up the Bolshevik Party together, that Lenin never made an important move without consulting Stalin. Yet, despite the fact that Lenin lived mainly abroad until 1917 and Stalin was in Russia all those years, there is not a single letter from Lenin to Stalin to substantiate the present Soviet claim of intimate collaboration. This is all the more remarkable in view of Lenin's wide correspondence with his party lieutenants inside Russia and abroad. Copies of most of these letters have survived; some were intercepted by the Tsarist secret police and published after the Revolution. The fact that not one was addressed to Stalin is the best answer to the prevailing Lenin-Stalin myth.

The last two volumes of the present edition contain several dozen letters and more than a hundred telegrams and notes which did not appear in the earlier texts. From these, we learn much that is new about the man, his character, his views, his relations to people, and his rôle in the Social Democratic movement and the Revolution.

From the new letters, it becomes clearer than ever that Lenin had little respect for even his closest collaborators and friends. (Since Stalin later executed most of them, it serves a useful propaganda function to publish evidence that Lenin despised them.) As long as his associates obeyed him, Lenin was friendly; as soon as they opposed his tactics or plans, he flayed them mercilessly. Regarding Lunacharsky, the future Commissar of Education, and Manuilsky, the future head of the Comintern, Lenin wrote in 1916: "These people are without heads." Of Karl Radek, he wrote the same year: "Radek conducts himself in politics like an impudent, impertinent, stupid huckster. . . . If Radek did not understand what he was doing, then he is a little fool. If he understood, then he is a scoundrel." In the same letter, he wrote, "Yuri [Piatakov] doesn't have a particle of brains; he's like a little pig." After a quarrel with Bukharin and Piatakov, he wrote in November, 1916: "I have done everything possible for a *peaceful* settlement. If you don't like it,

I'll smash your faces and show you up as little fools before the whole world."²

On February 19, 1917, Lenin wrote: "Received a letter from Kolontai who has just returned to Norway from America. Nicolai Ivanovich [Bukharin] and Pavlov (the Lett, Pavel Ivanovich, who was in Brussels) have captured the *Novyi Mir* [a Social-Democratic paper in New York], but . . . Trotsky arrived and that scoundrel at once palled up with the *right* wing of the *Novyi Mir* against the Left Zimmerwaldists! That's how it is! That's Trotsky! Always himself. Wags his tail, cheats, poses as a left winger, helps the *right* wingers as long as possible."

In a letter written in January, 1917, he described Robert Grimm, chairman of the anti-war socialist conference at Zimmerwald and then leader of the Swiss Social Democratic Party, as a "rascal" and "scoundrel."

Clara Zetkin, later one of the Comintern leaders, does not fare better. In a letter to the Foreign Bureau of the Bolshevik Party in Stockholm, Lenin describes her in 1917 as one of the "scoundrels who, for reasons of intrigue, have whitewashed and supported the Russian Mensheviks, Chkheidze and Company, who have turned into ministerial scoundrels like Sembat, Renaudel and Thomas. [then the leaders of the French Socialist Party]. The same letter also calls the Danish Social Democratic leader and future Premier, Stauning, "the rascal."

The letters to Maxim Gorky are interesting. Gorky, a friend of Lenin's for years before the 1905 Revolution, often obtained large donations for the Bolshevik Party and contributed large sums of his own. As one of Russia's most popular writers, his name meant a great deal for Lenin's periodicals. In the letters to Gorky, there is much flattery. In a letter of January, 1913, Lenin highly recommends Roman Malinovsky to Gorky as one of the "good boys." "Believe me, with such people one can build a workers' party." Shortly after this letter was written, Malinovsky was exposed as an agent of the Tsarist Okhrana, who had been serving as Lenin's *de facto* deputy in Russia—with the Okhrana's knowledge and consent. Even Gorky, however, does not always escape Lenin's scathing attack. In December, 1916, he complained to Inessa Armand that "my manuscript on imperialism reached Petrograd and they write

²All italics in Lenin quotes are in the original, as are the parentheses; explanations are in brackets when within a Lenin quotation. D.S.

today that the publisher (and that is Gorky! oh, the calf!) is dissatisfied with the sharp words against—whom do you think? Kautsky! He wants to write to me about it!!! It is comic and insulting."

Inessa Armand's name is not known to the general public. However, in the last years before the war and until 1920, when she died of cholera, she played an important part in the Bolshevik Party. There are many letters to her in volume thirty-five. Some of Lenin's letters to Inessa were published a few years after her death, but most of them appear here for the first time, three decades later. It is interesting that in the letters that appeared in the earlier editions, Lenin always addressed her in the formal "you" whereas in the 1913-1914 letters which appear here, he uses the familiar "thou," which is an uncommon usage for Lenin. Strangely, in 1915, he returns to the "you" form. Most of these letters deal with Party matters, but there is one which discusses the subject of extramarital love, others in which he addresses her in English as "my dear friend" and one which advises her to take up skiing. "Do you ski?" he asks, "By all means ski . . . and by all means over the mountains. It is excellent in the mountains in winter. Splendid and it smells of Russia." This is the most human note in the entire volume.

Immediately after the war started, Lenin sharply attacked the Socialists who agitated for peace. On September 17, 1914, he wrote to Shliapnikov: "The slogan 'peace' is not correct. The slogan must be: 'turn the imperialist war into a civil war.' Not the sabotage of war, not individual actions in that spirit, but mass propaganda (not only among the civil population) leading to the transformation of war into civil war. . . . The moment of this transformation is another question. Now it is not yet clear. It is necessary to let this moment ripen, and to 'force it to ripen' systematically. . . . The slogan 'peace,' in my opinion, is not correct at the present time. This is a philistine, priestly slogan. The proletarian slogan must be civil war. . . . We cannot 'promise' or 'decree' a civil war, but to conduct work, if necessary for a very long time *in this direction* is our duty." Here, in Lenin's own words, is the best answer to those victims of Soviet history-writing who still argue that the civil war that followed the Bolshevik seizure of power was forced on Lenin by "White Guards" and foreign interventionists.

In a letter to Zinoviev (August, 1916) Lenin wrote: "We aren't at all against the defense of the fatherland *in general*; not against defensive wars *in general*. We are against the defense of the fatherland and defense in the *imperialist war* of 1914-1916, and in other *im-*

perialist wars typical of the imperialist epoch. But in the imperialist epoch there *can be* 'just,' 'defensive,' revolutionary wars (i.e., national, civil, socialist, etc.)."

While Mme. Kollontai was in America, Lenin wrote to her (November 9, 1915): "What is Eugene Debs? Does he sometimes write in a revolutionary manner or is he also a rag à la Kautsky? . . . If there are people in America who are *even* afraid of the Zimmerwald Manifesto, then spit on them and pick only those who are *left* of the Zimmerwald Manifesto."

On August 23, 1915, Lenin wrote to Shliapnikov: "It is asked 'What will "you" do, if you revolutionaries defeat Tsarism?' I reply: 1) Our victory will enflame a hundred times the movement of the 'Leftists' in Germany. 2) If 'we' defeat Tsarism completely, we would offer peace to all belligerents on democratic conditions and in the event of a refusal, we would conduct *revolutionary war*." (In power, Lenin found it necessary to sign draconian peace terms on the conditions laid down by Imperial Germany.)

Even before reaching Russia in April, 1917, Lenin rejected co-operation with other socialist parties. On March 25, 1917, he wrote Lunacharsky: "The independence and special character of our Party, *no rapprochement with other parties* is categorical for me—without it, it is impossible to help the proletariat go from the *democratic* overthrow to the *commune*, and I will not serve any other goals."

To Ganetsky he wrote five days later: "The appeal to the Germans by the bourgeois, *imperialist* republic of Russia 'Overthrow Wilhelm' is a repetition of the fraudulent slogan of the French social chauvinists, betrayers of socialism, Jules Guesde, Sembat and Co. We must explain, very popularly, very clearly, without scholarly words, to workers and soldiers that not only Wilhelm but the British and the Italian kings must be overthrown, and we must begin with Russia, otherwise peace cannot be obtained. . . . To trust either Chkheidze [Social Democratic chairman of the Petrograd Soviet] or Sukhanov or Steklov [both left socialists] is impossible. No *rapprochement* with other parties, with no one!"

That Lenin advocated dictatorship and terror long before the Revolution we know from the memoirs of many old Bolsheviks. From the letters published in this edition, it becomes plainer than before that Lenin drove other Bolshevik leaders to conduct mass terror, sometimes against their will. In a letter of June 26, 1918, to Zinoviev (who was executed by Stalin together with Kamenev in 1936), Lenin wrote: "Only today we heard in the Central Committee

that in Petrograd the *workers* wanted to answer to the assassination of Volodarsky with mass terror and that you (not you personally, but the Petrograd members of the Central Committee) restrained them. I protest decisively. We compromise ourselves. Even in the resolutions of the Soviet we threaten mass terror, and when it comes to action, we put the brakes on the revolutionary initiative of the masses, who are *absolutely* right. This is im-poss-ible! Terrorists will consider us rags. This is an arch-war situation. We must work up energy and masslike terror against counter-revolutionaries, and especially in Petrograd, the example of which is *decisive*."

In a wire to the Nizhni Novgorod Soviet, dated August 9, 1918, Lenin said: "In Nizhni Novgorod there are clearly preparations for a White Guard uprising. We must gather our strength, set up a dictatorial trio and institute mass terror *immediately*; shoot and ferret out hundreds of prostitutes who get the soldiers drunk, former officers, etc. Not a moment of delay. It is necessary to act all-out. Mass searches, execution for concealment of weapons. Mass seizure of Mensheviks and other unreliaables."

Eleven days later, he sent a dispatch to the executive committee in Livny: "Congratulations on the energetic suppression of the kulaks in the district. It is necessary to forge while the iron is hot, and not lose a minute in organizing the poor in the district, confiscate all the grain and property of the rebellious kulaks, hang the instigators among the kulaks, and take hostages among the rich. . . ."

A few weeks after the attempt on his life, Lenin wired the staff of the Fifth Army in Sviazhsk: "Thanks for the greetings. Recuperation goes splendidly. Certain that the suppression of the Kazan Czechs and the White Guards, as well as the blood-drinking kulaks who supported them, will be of exemplary ruthlessness."

From these revealing documents, now published by the Soviet government, it is clearer than ever that the terrible machine for the destruction of freedom and human rights, whose name is Communist dictatorship, as well as the whole Communist morality, was primarily the creation of Lenin himself. Stalin has merely perfected the destructiveness of that machine.

If the unwitting purpose of the Soviet government, in publishing these letters and documents, is to disillusion those people, in and out of Russia, who still believe that Lenin "meant well" and that Stalin is the villain of the piece, then these final volumes will perform that purpose—for all who take the trouble to read them carefully. If this clear exposure of Lenin's utter ruthlessness and his contempt for all

who differed with him, in large matters and small, is meant as a brief for Stalin's savage intolerance of all independent thought, then it seems a double-edged weapon. For in minds that are still searching for the truth, it may help to stimulate fundamental questions about the very foundations of the Leninist-Stalinist philosophy of power which it was certainly not the intention of the State Publishing House in Moscow to raise.

Claims and Realities of Soviet Socialism

BY GEORGE C. GUINS

THE representatives of the Communist Party and the Soviet press have declared that socialism in the U.S.S.R. has been victorious. The explanatory memorandum published in Soviet newspapers on January 30, 1939, simultaneously with the theses of an economic program for the future, proclaimed: "We have fully adopted a socialist system. . . . We have liquidated the peasant, the industrialist, the merchant." The same has been asserted in the *History of the Communist Party*:

"The effect of the Five-Year Plan was to lay the unshakable foundation of a socialist economic system in our country in the shape of a first-class socialist heavy industry and collective mechanized agriculture, to put an end to unemployment, to abolish the exploitation of man by man, and to create the conditions for the steady improvement of the material standards of our working people."¹

In his speech on the Twenty-Sixth Anniversary of the October Revolution, November 6, 1943, Stalin proudly announced "the greatest achievements of the Soviet system." Since then, similar praises have been repeated on every occasion and in every official announcement and publication.

"We have no unemployment, and shall not have any," claimed the *Moscow News* on November 7, 1946. "This makes things easier for workers and white-collar workers of our country. We do not have the anarchy in production characteristic of capitalism which leads alternately to booms and crises that shake the whole economic system to its foundations and make the working people forever uncertain of tomorrow. Our economic life is directed by a national plan."

And on December 24, 1946, Leontiev, writing in *Izvestia*, asserted: "Soviet citizens are free from exploitation; they do not know enslaving dependence on the strong of this world; they are free from the threat of unemployment, which, like the sword of Damocles, hangs over the heads of the workers, white-collar workers and professional men in the capitalist countries."

¹*History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, New York, 1939; pp. 329-330.

Elimination of unemployment, of economic depressions and exploitation was described by the *Moscow News* of November 7, 1946, as a striking accomplishment of the Soviet system in these words: "The Soviet people are marching ahead confidently, unafraid of economic crises or unemployment; for they have to support them a different, superior, socialist system of economic organization, which knows neither crises nor unemployment."

Let us now consider whether these alleged advantages of the Soviet system really exist.

In Soviet diatribes against capitalism, the problem of depressions is usually the paramount point. The crises of capitalist economy arise as a consequence of overproduction. But these crises, occurring when supply exceeds demand, are, we may say, an embarrassment of overabundance. They are the result of a lack of planning and organization on a national scale. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Soviet economy, since it is a planned one, prevents crises of this type.

However, every economic system has its own kind of crises. In the Soviet Union capitalism is an unknown entity; hence there are no capitalist crises. But the system of universal state monopoly existing in the Soviet Union under the guise of socialism has its own peculiar crises, the crises of a planned system, namely disproportion in the various parts of the plan,² violation or non-observance of the plan, underproduction, and overexpenditures.

The crises of capitalist economy indisputably shake the whole national structure because of the interdependence of all its parts. They are a real disaster for employers and workers alike. Due to the universal State monopoly there are no such crises in the Soviet Union. But there is never an abundance of goods, either. Its crises are the crises of shortage.

There are no economic emergencies of the capitalist type in the Soviet Union because there is no competition within the country and the government permits none from outside. Itself a monopolist, the State can shift workers from one branch of the economy to another. The workers are either under direct compulsion by the State or are prompted by economic conditions, which in turn are controlled by the State. The Soviet government can raise or lower prices of goods without fear of bankruptcy. The workers cannot demand higher

²See W. W. Leontiev, Sr., "Soviet Planning; the Problem of Economic Balance," *The Russian Review*, v. 6, No. 1, Autumn, 1946, pp. 33-34.

pay, and the government can, in effect, lower wages simply by raising the prices of necessities, which are entirely at its disposal.

But there are other sorts of crisis to plague the Soviet Union. Lack of commodities, high prices, low wages, and the low purchasing power of money due to the scarcity of goods are a few. If the essence of a depression, as an economic calamity, is the pauperization of the masses, then there is a permanent depression in the Soviet Union. Every new dialectical zigzag and retreat toward the principles of free economy gives evidence of periodic aggravation of this situation and of the consequent necessity for seeking ways to alleviate it. The crisis of the *kolkhoz* economy after World War II is another striking illustration of the type of disaster to which the Soviet system is subject. Now the Soviet government divides *kolkhoz* workers into small "links," now it declares the "link" system a mistake, compels its author to repent and introduces the "consolidation of *kolkhozes*."³ In February, 1950, a war of extinction was initiated against small economic units; during the fall of 1950 it was still in full career, and in April, 1951, it had already been stopped.

Capitalist countries have already devised means of relieving depressions—unemployment insurance, public works, accumulation of savings and operating reserves during prosperous times, and stockpiling of surplus commodities. When necessary they can also adopt some methods of planning. The difficulties that sometimes arise can be attributed, to a considerable extent, to the dependence of one nation on another in this age of global economy, since there is no organization for the supervision of *world* trade. However, multinational agreements and special supranational institutions, like the International Bank, tend to offset even these negative factors.

On the other hand, the Soviet system has not yet proved that it can overcome its characteristic crisis of chronic poverty. Its expedients are always of a pattern—demands for new sacrifices and intensified efforts from the population. Its practices are radical and ruthless; it dooms millions of peasants to hunger or starvation in reprisal for sabotage of the *kolkhoz* system and compels hundreds of thousands of people to move to icy wildernesses. It strictly limits imports, depriving the Soviet peoples of foreign goods, and practically separates the country from the outside world. The result is a strengthening of arbitrary rule within the country and of chaos in the rest of the world.

³Boris I. Nikolaevsky, "The New Soviet Campaign Against the Peasants," *The Russian Review*, v. 10, No. 2, April, 1951.

The Soviet system prides itself on its lack of unemployment. But what does "unemployment" mean? It does not mean that people cannot find any work at all; it means, rather, that people cannot find work corresponding to their qualifications and furnishing them sufficient remuneration. If unions, at the first sign of a depression, allowed their members to accept work of any kind and at any wages, unemployment would not exist even in capitalist countries.

If unemployment is non-existent in the Soviet Union it is only because the State completely controls labor and there are no strong, independent unions to protect the workers. The millions of its own citizens banished by the Soviet Union to labor camps were augmented during and after the war by foreigners from the occupied countries and the satellites.⁴ People perish in droves in these camps, as has been eloquently testified by numerous Poles and others who managed to survive the horrors. Another explanation of the absence of unemployment in the Soviet Union lies in the shortage of manpower for carrying out the Five-Year Plans.

During the last war the Soviet Union literally bled. The number of workers and white-collar workers in the Soviet national economy fell from 31,200,000 in 1940 to 19,300,000 in 1943.⁵ Reading descriptions in the Soviet papers of rural life, one can imagine that almost the whole burden of the Soviet Union's agricultural work rests on the shoulders of women. More than 50 percent of the workers in the factories still are women and young people. Even before the war, in 1939, there were seven million more women than men in the U.S.S.R. After World War II it is more than probable that this figure at least doubled. Reconstruction of ruined cities and factories was very hard because of the paucity of material resources, as well as manpower, especially engineers and skilled workers.⁶

"In the postwar period an important component of the forced labor group has consisted of German, Japanese, and other prisoners of war, as well as dissident citizens of areas in Eastern Europe and Asia that were occupied by the Red Army at the end of World War II. Large numbers of Poles, Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians have also apparently been deported from their homelands in the postwar period and added to the ranks of this group." Harry Schwartz, *Russia's Soviet Economy*, New York, 1950, p. 488.

⁴Schwartz, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

⁵"The demographic loss inflicted on the Soviet Union by the second World War appears to have reached 37.5 million. This loss can be attributed to military deaths, birth deficit, loss through excess of emigration over immigration, and civilian deaths." N. S. Timasheff, "The Postwar Population of the Soviet Union," *The American Journal of Sociology*, v. 54, No. 2, Sept. 1948.

The Soviet government encourages large families and rewards mothers who bear many children. A variety of measures are introduced to increase pecuniary aid to expectant mothers, to mothers of large families and to unmarried mothers, as well as to improve protection of mother and child. A law of July 8, 1944, provides for the payment of special premiums to mothers for the third child, the sum beginning with 400 rubles a year and greatly increasing with each additional child. For the eleventh and each subsequent child a happy mother receives 5,500 rubles at once and 300 rubles monthly for the next four years. On the other hand, a special tax is levied on small families. This tax is imposed on all men from 20 to 50 and all women from 20 to 45, whether married or unmarried, who have less than three children.

According to Article 20 of the same law, "investigation as to fatherhood is prohibited," as was until recently the case in France under the Code Napoléon. Thus, men do not fear the consequences of casual intercourse and liaisons, while unmarried mothers receive a special allotment, 100 rubles monthly for the first child, 150 for the second, and 200 for the third. Unmarried mothers with more than three children receive the same premiums as married mothers. Besides these premiums, a special order of "Glory of Motherhood" and the honorary title "Mother Heroine" are granted to mothers of large families, and *Izvestia Verkhovnogo Sovieta* is full of citations concerning such awards.

In spite of all these measures the Soviet Union still needs manpower. The fact that the Soviet government has delayed the repatriation of war prisoners and tries to draw out of Western Europe hundreds of thousands of displaced persons and emigrés indicates not only mistrust of future international developments but also a desperate shortage of manpower.

How is it possible, under such circumstances, to boast of overcoming unemployment?

Now to the problem of "exploitation of man by man." Marxian dogma defines this as the appropriation of "surplus value" by the entrepreneur, or, in other words, as inadequate compensation. We believe that for the average factory or farm worker it makes no difference who is responsible for a pay envelope which is too slim, an entrepreneur or the State. Nor is it relevant to him who lives at his expense, a capitalist or a landlord or an official. The Soviet Union has bred millions of "paper workers" and all kinds of police agents who are better fed and dressed than people working in the factories

and in the fields. A Soviet economist justifies this by citing the needs of the future, but for a worker or a peasant it is still exploitation. If, in the words of an old Russian saying, "a crucian (a favorite Russian fish) likes to be fried in sour cream," then there is no exploitation in the Soviet Union. If a peasant or a worker likes to live hungry and exhausted while his government spends great amounts on all sorts of stage properties designed to impress the outside world and on furthering worldwide Communism, then there is no exploitation in the Soviet Union.

Let us suppose that a factory under private ownership paid its workers 300,000 rubles and allotted the owner 30,000 rubles by way of profit. If the same factory, after transfer to state ownership, pays its workers 250,000 rubles and the State pockets the same 30,000 rubles, the workers can only lose through the change in economic system. It is still worse if the 50,000 rubles decrease in the workers' earnings is the result of mismanagement, defective manufacture, and non-productive expenditures. Workers then lose also as consumers.

But even if the State, at the expense of the workers' decreased earnings and added deprivations, covers its losses and receives no less than the private entrepreneur, and perhaps more, the issue is still not decided in favor of State economy. Under private ownership the workers can by themselves or through their unions significantly better their economic position, and their government is able to carry out methodical social planning in accordance with the wishes of the majority of the population.

The same reasoning applies to agriculture. If a peasant still lives in semi-starvation under the *kolkhoz* system just as he did before, if he remits to the omniscient State the lion's share of the harvest just as he had formerly paid the landowner for rental of the land, he will not call the new system of cooperative agricultural economy a more perfect system. It is still worse if the *kolkhoz* authority shows indifference toward its farm, does not sow and harvest on time, leaves part of the crop unharvested, breaks machinery, does not justify capital expenditures for the improvement of agriculture. There is no exploitation by private individuals (landowners), but neither is there any benefit from "socialism." On the contrary, a peasant, like everyone else, loses as a citizen and consumer.

Soviet theoreticians usually turn aside reproaches for exploitation of labor in their land by asserting that everything belongs to everybody in the Soviet Union and that he who works for the State

works in fact for his own profit. But this assertion is false. Nationalization of all means of production does not mean at all that everybody owns everything. It means only that instead of numerous private owners there is just one—the monopolist State.⁷

It is more appropriate to compare the citizens of the Soviet state with the shareholders of a large company than to call them co-owners of State property. As is well known, the rôle of the ordinary stockholder in such an establishment is very insignificant and still less significant are his profits. The major share of the profits is usually distributed among the directors, higher officials, and big stockholders. The board of directors controls the business without much attention to the interests of ordinary small shareholders. The general meetings, open to all the shareholders, are largely formalities. The shareholders are informed about the condition and activities of the company only to the extent deemed expedient by the board of directors, and all resolutions are prepared beforehand and are put through with lightning speed.

Due to its dependence on the State, the great majority of the Soviet population, like the majority of the shareholders mentioned above, has no voice in proceedings and receives few benefits. But it is not the same as far as losses caused by waste and mismanagement are concerned. The Soviet economic structure and methods of remuneration are well adapted to the purpose of passing the losses on to the people. In this case the workers and farmers are really considered as co-owners of all the State enterprises. The collective farms deliver the major portion of the grain to the government, which feeds its employees and laborers with it and exports part of it.

⁷Contrasting with the officially proclaimed identification of the Soviet state and its population is this decree of December 14, 1947: "The carrying out of the currency reform demands certain sacrifices. The State is taking on itself the greater part of the sacrifices, but it is also necessary for the population to bear a portion of them, the more so as this will be the last sacrifice." Thus, an official decree distinguishes between sacrifices of the State and those of the population. This phraseology employed by Soviet officials correctly reflects the actual relationship between the Soviet state and its population, although all sacrifices are, in fact, borne by the people.

A distinction between State and population is also mirrored in the comments of Soviet jurors on some economic laws. For example, N. D. Kazantsev, commenting upon the decree of September 19, 1946, concerning the elimination of violations of the collective farms chapter, recommended the following gradation of different (!) interests: First, interests of the State, then some needs of the *kolkhoz* itself, and last of all, the individual interests of the members of the *kolkhoz*. See *Sovetskoe Gosudarstvo i Pravo*, 1946, No. 11-12.

By comparing the purchase price with the selling price, one could calculate how many billions the State makes on the grain trade alone. However, the same large profits are accumulated by Soviet "trading" in all the other agricultural products as well. On the other hand, since it has possession of all the products of the urban industries and it faces no competitors, the State can demand its own prices for them.⁸

After the war's end, Zhdanov, who substituted for Stalin as speaker at the Twenty-Ninth Anniversary of the October Revolution, asserted that the whole burden of sacrifice in the bourgeois countries falls on the workers and farmers: "[Our] sacrifices [due to war devastation] cannot be compared in any way with the sacrifices of workers and white-collar workers in capitalist states, which are very great indeed, since the capitalists do not assume any of the burden of post-war rehabilitation themselves, but shift all the hardships onto the shoulders of the workers, peasants and white-collar workers alone. These hardships consist primarily of an enormous increase in unemployment and the firing of workers and office employees from their jobs."

With purely demagogical intent, Zhdanov purposely failed to mention the progressive income tax and high level of wages in the Western democracies, as well as the generous support rendered to veterans. As for the Soviet Union, where the whole population is supposed to consist of workers and peasants, who can bear the burden of expenses and losses but the workers and peasants? And nowhere else in the world is the press so filled with exhortations to new and greater sacrifices.

What, then, has the Soviet government accomplished? The liquidation of capitalism with all its deadly sins is not the only asset of the Soviet system claimed by the Soviet leaders as a "great achievement" of Soviet socialism. Industrialization of the nation and mechanization of agriculture as the effect of the realization of Five-Year-Plans undoubtedly cannot be ignored. It remains to be

⁸"The price policy of the Soviet government is the key factor in the structure of prices consumers pay in the U.S.S.R. This price is directly linked with the entire complex of political and economic objectives sought by the State and hence is subject to both economic and non-economic factors. . . . The actual level of government prices for consumer goods is substantially above the level of cost to the government, including both production and distribution costs. . . . In 1940 . . . total turnover tax receipts were almost 106,000,000,000 rubles, of which probably about 90 per cent, or 95,000,000,000 rubles, were paid out for food and consumer-goods receipts." Schwartz, *op. cit.*, pp. 373, 375.

proved, however, that the methods used to develop heavy industry in the Soviet Union were really the most expedient and that it was impossible to achieve the same with less sacrifices and deprivations of the population.

During the period of the realization of the Five-Year Plans the Soviet economy did not trouble itself with problems of expenses and losses. It is very expensive to produce synthetic rubber from the *Kok-Sagyz*, a dandelion-like plant of Central Asia. Nevertheless, it is produced without regard to cost. Despite serious doubts as to the practicability of a mechanical cotton-picking machine, a kind of elaborate vacuum cleaner, since cotton balls are not ready simultaneously, expensive experimentation is being carried on with this device. In Leningrad it is very costly to replace imported coal with coal from Donbas; however, import of coal from England is banned. And so forth. Cost will not deter Soviet planners if a problem has to be solved. Such unsound financial procedure is possible only when the State controls the entire economy and the administrative apparatus has at its disposal all profits, as well as the power to distribute them exclusive of supervision by an independent legislature. Within the country the purchasing power of Soviet money is completely dependent on the State, which dictates the prices of all important commodities, housing, transportation facilities, and the like. Soviet citizens have nothing to use their money for if there are no goods on the market, and they give it back to the State in the form of loans.

Thus, the success of the Soviet Five-Year Plans can be ascribed largely to the power of depriving the population of even the most necessary commodities and to the readiness of the people to suffer all kinds of hardships. It should be remembered, moreover, that in the Soviet Union there is no importation of consumer goods to make up for the insufficiency of domestic production. Though poorly supplied, the population of the country has, nevertheless, enormous losses and expenses. The sacrifices of several generations in the interests of the nation's future could be justified if it were really impossible to achieve the same result with less suffering and regimentation and fewer deprivations. The appraisal of the system must take into consideration whether the potential future benefits are proportionate to the sacrifices. It is necessary to ascertain impartially whether a system of private enterprise with trade unions and government protection of the workers' interests cannot insure greater development of national economy and the enrichment of the

nation than can the nationalization and state management of all enterprises and material resources.

Laying aside the general appraisal of the Soviet planned economy, we were, in the present article, interested especially in how the Soviet leaders have explained the advantages of their economic system for the rank and file worker and peasant. In our view, no advantage results for the worker if, under State ownership of a factory, he receives the same amount as he did when the factory was a private enterprise. It is still worse if he receives even less and cannot even protest, since the government is his employer. For him it is slight consolation that someone someday will live much better, that he is working for the unknown future. This can inspire only a few who are fired with ideology and only for a comparatively short period. For the others, "the future is the vampire of the present."

The Tragedy of the Cosmopolite Tairov

BY GREGOR ARONSON

TOWARD the end of January, 1949, there began in the Soviet Union, by decree of the Politburo, a vicious campaign against the so-called "cosmopolites" and "admirers of the West" who had managed to penetrate deeply into all the recesses of the Soviet organism.

Heeding the signal given by the newspaper *Culture and Life*, the official organ of the Press Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, a wave of patriotic denunciations, served up under a nationalistic sauce with an admixture of some rather obvious anti-Semitism, swept over all the other Soviet newspapers and magazines. Lists of writers, scientists, and artists, suspected of cosmopolitanism or pro-Western sentiments, began to appear almost daily in accusatory articles in the press. If a writer or artist used a pseudonym, his real Jewish name would be disclosed at once to underline the true anti-Jewish aspect of the whole campaign of obscurantism, denunciations, persecutions, and ostracism. Literary and theatrical critics were the first victims of this vicious drive, soon to be followed by other representatives of the intelligentsia of whose loyalty and integrity there had been no previous doubt: economists and artists, novelists and historians, musicians and pedagogues.

The Politburo spared no epithets to condemn those fallen under suspicion. And there was no end to the glee with which the one-hundred-per-cent-Russians whose ultra-nationalistic feelings had been so vigorously fanned during the war, arose to attack their erstwhile comrades. It seemed as if the long-pent-up sentiments had finally broken through the dam, and one suddenly received the opportunity, even with the kind and tolerant permission of the government, to start attacking Jews in the Soviet Union!

Heavy and serious accusations were hurled against these people—loyal Soviet citizens who had been raised and brought up under the Soviet system, some of them members of the Party with excellent records and occupying responsible positions in the Soviet set-up, were denounced for manifold crimes: formalism, aestheticism, alienation from Russia in general and from the Soviet Union in particu-

lar, cosmopolitanism, small-Jewish-town psychology, servility before the West. They became apostates who maligned everything Russian, defenders of ideas hostile to the Soviets and to the people, anti-Marxist cosmopolites, passportless tramps, people with neither kith nor kin. *The Literary Gazette* of February 12, 1949, noted with satisfaction:

We have finally revealed the true nature of this group of apostates and cosmopolites. . . . Hundreds of examples have shown us the true gory and servile nature of these individuals. . . . We cherish our national genius, Pushkin. . . . But these passportless tramps have tried to relegate even Pushkin to the position of a simple translator. . . . We cherish our Gorky. . . . But these people without kith or kin have attempted to slander the great proletarian writer. . . . We cherish our Moscow. . . . But these stowaways have endeavored to block the entrance into the famed Maly Theater. . . . It is our patriotic duty to keep our fire directed at them. . . .

In the roster of cosmopolites which *Soviet Art* had been publicizing for several months in succession, there was, under the dateline of May 21, 1949, the name of Tairov, the founder and director of the Kamerny Theater (Chamber Theater). A few distinguished theatrical personalities had been named prior to that: the theatrical critic Yuzovsky, the critic Gurvich, the art expert Arkin, the writer Isbach, the historians Mintz and Rubinstein, the historian of painting, Abram Efros. The hand of the obscurants had already reached out for the poet Pasternak. But the position of Tairov, in comparison with theirs, had seemed strong and firm. And when the name of Alexander Yakovlevich Tairov appeared in the roster of cosmopolites it had to attract universal attention.

Tairov and his Kamerny Theater occupied a most distinguished position in the Russian theatrical world, perhaps not quite of the stature of Stanislavsky or Meyerhold, but nevertheless widely acclaimed and talked about. Tairov's principal mistake was that he had chosen the wrong parents; he was born in the city of Berdichev, and his father, whose name was Jacob Kornblit, was a merchant. Tairov himself was not unconscious of his Jewishness and in 1905, while still a student, he belonged to the local "Bund"—the Jewish Socialist organization.

The second vulnerable spot in Tairov's career was the fact that he was the creator of the Kamerny Theater. True, he always displayed a remarkable adaptability; true, he was the recipient of the Order of Lenin and bore the titles of a People's Artist of the Union of Soviet Federated Socialist Republics and of an Honored Artist of the

Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic; true, in the 1948 issue of the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia*, in the volume entitled U.S.S.R., Tairov was mentioned as one of the outstanding Soviet stage directors,—his whole theatrical career was, nevertheless, in direct contradiction to the Soviet régime, as if constantly proclaiming against the totalitarian state and its violence and its subjugation of the individual. In spite of all the compromises, which were inevitable for the sake of self-preservation, the Kamerny Theater always remained an isolated isle, foreign to its Soviet surroundings. It is small wonder, then, that the Kamerny Theater became a regular target for official attacks, persecutions, and restrictions. The great wonder is that it had managed to exist in spite of everything for thirty years.

In 1906, while still a student, Alexander Yakovlevich Tairov decided to become an actor. At one time he played with the famed Kommissarjevskaya. But his real calling, he soon discovered, was not acting but directing. The Kamerny Theater was founded by Tairov at the outset of the First World War. The play selected for the opening of the theater on December 12, 1914, was "Sakuntala" by the Hindu poet Kalidas, in Konstantin Balmont's translation. In those years, the period of quests for new ways in the arts and the theater in Russia, Tairov's Kamerny Theater was more in consonance with contemporary life than any other similar undertaking.

What were Tairov's beliefs during the first formative years of his theater? What were his views on the art of the theater? What was his artistic credo, and whither did he strive? "The theater must exist as the greatest source of joy and light. Romanticism is the basic ideal that unifies the repertory of the Kamerny Theater. I have ejected all everyday life from the theater, its repertory tells of great aspirations and impulses, it calls for vigor, faith, and activity." Thus, in somewhat adolescent and vague terms, Tairov defined his own theatrical aspirations. He made an attempt to outline his goal more lucidly in his book *Notes of a Stage-Manager* which was published in 1921. "I am not a philosopher and I am not a scientist," he wrote, "but I am a stage manager, a craftsman and a builder of the theater. Of all the sciences only one excites me—the science of our art. This science however can be grasped only through the magic spectacles of Cheliontat for which an especially long nose is needed." He defended the idea of pure stagecraft, strongly condemning realism in the theater and constantly fighting against what he termed the "philosophy of the nightcap." He refused to recognize the pre-eminence of the playwright over the actor, and Meyerhold's

dictum that "Literature creates the theater" Tairov countered with his own "Literature is only material for the theater, and nothing else." He was, consequently, not so much interested in the idea or the contents of a play as "in the rhythm of abstract and synthetic action." The goal of the Kamerny Theater was to create a "synthetic actor," an actor, who would be simultaneously a singer, dancer, juggler, acrobat.

Until 1924-1925 Tairov managed to remain true to his own ideals and to himself, and, in spite of the strong pressure exerted on him by the Bolsheviks, to retain the position which the Kamerny Theater commanded in the theatrical world. Among Tairov's successful offerings were: "Romeo and Juliet" and "The Merry Wives of Windsor" by Shakespeare; "The Marriage of Figaro" by Beaumarchais; "The Storm" by Ostrovsky; "Life Is a Dream" by Calderon; "Phèdre" by Racine. But still more characteristic of the Kamerny Theater were the following productions: "King Arlequin" by Lothar, "Famira Kifared" by Innokenty Annensky, "Cyrano de Bergerac" by Rostand, "Antigone" by Hasenclever, "The Tydings" by Claudel, "Salome" by Wilde, "Desire under the Elms" and "All God's Chillun's Got Wings" by O'Neill, "Adrienne Lecouvreur," with Koonen and Tseretelli in the cast, "The Princess Brambilla" (based on Hoffmann), and "Jiroffle-Jiroffla." The last three productions created a great stir among the theater-going public of Moscow. Nothing like them was ever seen on the Russian stage. The rich symphony of color, the brilliance of the clownish performances, the magnificence of the settings, the originality of the costumes, the mass of acrobatic tricks—all these elements of external theatrical grandeur accompanied by an excellent musical score—created the impression of the "very last word in the art of the Russian theater." More than that, through their sheer magic they helped the Russian theater-goer to escape for a while from his drab everyday life. When, a few years after the Revolution, Tairov took his Kamerny Theater on a European tour, even the sophisticated French dramatic critics were impressed. A debate was started in the French press as to the comparative qualities of the Moscow Art Theater and the Kamerny. "Stanislavsky," wrote Antoin, "never destroys but always improves." To this Atard countered: "Tairov never destroys but always creates."

It is interesting to note that the then official overseer of all art in Russia, the first Bolshevik Minister of Education, Lunacharsky, found it necessary to enter the general discussion of Tairov's pro-

duction of "Jiroffle-Jiroffla." "It is not only improper to frown upon the magnificent accomplishment in the realm of brilliant and uninhibited laughter which the Kamerny Theater gave us," wrote Lunacharsky, "but it is absolutely necessary to greet heartily this comical spectacle."

During the first years after the Revolution, Tairov surrounded himself with a host of very gifted actresses and actors.¹ Many outstanding musicians worked for Tairov, and the Kamerny Theater settings were painted by real masters.² The large theater-going public of Moscow liked and appreciated the Kamerny Theater. Even when, submitting to pressure and realizing the necessity of adapting himself to existing conditions, Tairov began to produce plays on social subjects written by Communist fellow-travelers or by playwrights whose works had to be produced by order of the authorities, it was the plays from the regular Tairov repertory and not the new Soviet plays that continued to enjoy popular favor. This had been admitted by *Soviet Art* itself, the publication that started the campaign against Tairov. "While such plays as 'At the Walls of Lenin-grad' or 'Konstantin Zaslouov' ran for only 30-50 performances," complained *Soviet Art* in its issue of May 12, 1949, "'Adrienne Lecouvreur,' 'Madame Bovary,' and 'Princess Brambilla' enjoyed runs of 200-300 performances." The public, it seems, remained faithful to Tairov and his Kamerny Theater to the very end.

Right after the Bolshevik Revolution, on November 9, 1917, the Council of People's Commissars issued a decree placing all Russian theaters under the jurisdiction of the People's Commissariat of Education. This decree, however, had validity only on paper. Lenin had hoped that Lunacharsky, the Commissar of Education, would be able to establish some kind of collaboration with the theatrical world and eventually control it, but Lenin's expectations did not materialize. During the first years of the Revolution, throughout the entire period of civil wars, the Russian theater remained bitterly antagonistic toward the dictatorship. The State assumed ownership of all theaters only on August 26, 1919, the date of the publication of an official decree introducing the nationalization of the stage. But then and even afterward the State was unable to control the theater completely, in spite of all the pressures and threats to cut off all subsidies. The entire history of the Kamerny Theater is per-

¹Koonen, Alexandrov, Arkadin, Fenin, Matissen, Novyansky, Tolubeyeva, Efron.

²Kuznetsov, Ekster, Ainsfeld, Yakulov, Sudeikin, Simov, Lentulov, Goncharova, Larionov.

meated with defiance of the authorities. During the government's fight against so-called "bourgeois formalism," "individualism," and "aestheticism" it reached out especially hard for the Kamerny Theater of Tairov. The Theater was deprived of the right to choose its own authors; it was compelled to produce typically Soviet "heroic" plays; it was ordered "to march in step with Soviet contemporary life."

During the period of the NEP, Tairov still managed somehow to wiggle out of serious trouble. But with the advent of collectivization and the inauguration of mass trials, the romance between the government and the intelligentsia was abruptly terminated, and the Russian theater entered its most tragic phase.

In 1932 the accusation was hurled against the Kamerny Theater that it "harbored reactionary artistic tendencies coupled with a reactionary ideology," and that it produced "ideologically and politically corrupt plays." A new campaign against "formalism" began in 1936, and it was directed principally against Shostakovich for his opera "Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk" and against Meyerhold. On November 15, 1936, *Pravda* carried an article about the "falsification of Russia's past" in a play by Demyan Bedny which had been produced by the Kamerny Theater. One can safely venture a guess that the Kamerny Theater was spared only because of the advent of the Second World War and the necessity for Stalin to re-orient his policy in accordance with the newly created conditions. The Kamerny Theater, consequently, received another lease on life. But so much greater was the Kremlin's fury when, intoxicated with victories, it resumed its former policy and embarked upon a new and merciless purge of the intelligentsia.

The fight against the so-called "cosmopolites" had begun in 1949. But even before that, for at least two and a half years, there had been conducted a campaign against all kinds of deviationists on the intellectual front. The acme of this campaign was the so-called Zhdanov purge of Russia's cultural life. On August 26, 1946, the Central Committee of the Communist Party published a decree "about the repertory of the theaters and the necessary measures for its improvement," directed against all attempts "to contaminate the stage with low grade banalities." The Kamerny Theater was openly named in the decree as one guilty of numerous offenses. In the bill of particulars it was accused of "aloofness from contemporary life," of cowardly "flight from Soviet reality." The Central Committee took especial pains to point out that of the eleven plays

produced by the Kamerny Theater during the past season only three were by Soviet authors.

Tairov attempted again to fight off this new threat of persecution. Adapting himself fully to the gory ways of the dictatorship, he came to the conference of actors, dramatists, and critics on September 30, 1946, with a complete confession of all his sins of commission and omission. He recognized all his "mistakes"; he admitted the erroneous pursuit on his part and on the part of the Kamerny Theater of "narrow-theatrical goals"; he acknowledged the fact that in searching "for newness for the sake of newness" he had lost the intimate connection with people and failed to create in his theater the image of the "New Soviet Man." He then appealed to his listeners to "grasp the full import of the competition which is going on between the communist and the capitalist worlds."³ Not content with this act of self-flagellation, Tairov published a self-abasing article in the almanac "The Soviet Theater and the Contemporary World," a publication of the All-Russia Theatrical Society that appeared early in 1947. In this article Tairov continued with the confession of his sins in full accordance with the officially prescribed code of behavior for recalcitrants. He heatedly proclaimed himself a most ardent believer in "Soviet realism" and, at the end of the article, paid the necessary rapturously enthusiastic tribute to Stalin's *Short Course in the History of the All-Union Communist Party*. But all this was of no avail. Tairov was doomed.

The full indictment of the Kamerny Theater was published at the height of the campaign against cosmopolitanism. It appeared in the May 21, 1949, issue of the newspaper *Sovetskoe Iskusstvo* (Soviet Art) under the title "The Fruits of Aestheticism and Formalism," and it bore no signature, which testified to the official character of the indictment. It gave a complete account of all Tairov's crimes.

As a result of the aesthetic, formalistic, and cosmopolite views of its director, A. Tairov, the Kamerny Theater has arrived at a creative *cul-de-sac*. Tairov has been searching for pure art everywhere; he has been calling for an escape from the social problems of our contemporary world into a world of mysticism and symbols, he has been striving to achieve an exquisite decadent form. . . . The brilliant visual form of a spectacle, the conditional and ephemeral world of exotic heroes have been more precious to him than the presentation of real life, of true sentiments and passions. . . . Tairov considers all sentiments as eternal and unchangeable, taken out of the context of their social surroundings. . . . Very frequently the Kamerny Theater needed no words to express these sentiments. They were replaced by pantomime; the actors expressed

³*Literary Gazette*, October 4, 1946.

themselves through conditional gestures, moving around rhythmically to the strains of music. . . . Such was the Kamerny Theater from the day of its inception until the October Revolution. But even after the October Revolution, Tairov remained true to his aesthetic concepts. He never renounced his aesthetic cosmopolitanism.

Tairov was openly hostile to "Socialist realism" that was being so ardently propagandized by the Bolsheviks. He called it, with unconcealed scorn, "grimacing dilettantism." He refused to recognize any artistic value in Soviet dramaturgy, and—most heinous of his crimes—"he was a consistent sycophant of the reactionary culture of the West." And, last but not least, he "modernized and aesthetically misinterpreted the true meaning" of Shakespeare, Beaumarchais, Wilde, Lothar, Claudel, and Hoffmann. In his productions of O'Neill's plays, instead of revealing racial discrimination and the evils of private ownership, Tairov pushed to the foreground individualistic tendencies or moral-aesthetic problems.

After the indictment had been published, Tairov and his closest collaborator within the Kamerny Theater were left to ponder their fate, and then, about a year later, the purge began. The "reorganization" of the Kamerny Theater brought about the fall of Tairov himself and of all those who had helped him to make the theater what it was, among them the famed actress, Alice Koonen.

On August 12, 1950, the paper *Soviet Art* reported that the Committee on Art of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. had decided to rename the Kamerny Theater and to change radically its entire repertory. The theater's new name became: The Pushkin Dramatic Theater of Moscow. The new season was to be opened in September with a Soviet propaganda play. A special meeting of the actors was held to discuss the matter of the "reorganization" and there was nothing they could do but adopt a resolution expressing "their heartfelt gratitude to the Party, the Government, and Comrade Stalin for their wonderful care of the welfare of the theater."

The opening of the new Pushkin Dramatic Theater of Moscow took place on October 21, 1950. The first production was, according to *Pravda*, which duly recorded the event on the following day, "a play devoted to the revolutionary activity of Comrade Stalin in Batumi."

Tairov himself was more fortunate than his theater: he died a month before the opening of his reorganized theater, on September 25, 1950, at the age of 65. To all appearances he died a natural death, and not from torture in the dungeons of G.P.U. as did another

colorful figure of the Russian stage, Tairov's competitor, Meyerhold. And here comes the final and most morbid touch of Soviet irony. The Art Committee of the Council of Ministers, the very same Committee that liquidated the Kamerny Theater and was about to liquidate Tairov himself, inserted a notice in the September 27 issue of *Pravda* announcing "with profound sorrow" the death of the famous director.

A Reactionary Liberal:

M. N. Katkov

BY MARC RAEFF

THE oppressive censorship exercised by the Tsarist régime throughout the nineteenth century did not prevent the publication of many journals of the most varied shades of opinion. Naturally, the editors of and contributors to these journals were most important figures in Russian society; and one of the most interesting and influential among them was Michael N. Katkov. The *enfant terrible* of Russian political journalism, Katkov held the center of the journalistic stage for over a quarter of a century, the most praised and the most vilified of Russian newspapermen. No doubt his voice was among the most popular and it made him influential in moulding public opinion. Oddly enough, however, there is no adequate study as yet of this interesting and important figure. In the general histories of the period we have only a few rather vague statements, mostly from the pen of his political enemies. The few biographical sketches available are post-mortem eulogies by his friends and admirers and they are as uncritical as the vilifications of his opponents. They have little value except as catalogues of factual detail.¹

Abroad, Katkov is perhaps best known for his chauvinist and

¹For biographical material on Katkov see:

S. A-v, "M. N. Katkov," *Russkii biograficheskii slovar*, vol. 8.

D. Ilovaisky, "M. N. Katkov—istoricheskaya pominka," *Russkii Arkhiv*, 1897, No. 1.

"Katkov—dokumenty k ego biografii," *Russkii Arkhiv*, 1909, No. 10.

"M. N. Katkov kak redaktor *Moskovskikh Vedomostei* i vozobnovitel *Russkogo Vestnika*," *Russkaya Starina*, 1897, Nos. 11 and 12.

A. Lyubimov, *M. N. Katkov i ego istoricheskaya zasluga, po dokumentam i lichnym vospominaniyam*, Moscow, 1889. First published in *Russkii Vestnik*, 1888-1889.

Nevedensky (J. Shcheglovitov), *Katkov i ego vremya*, St. Petersburg, 1888.

"Pamyati M. N. Katkova, 1887—20 July—1897," *Russkii Vestnik*, 1897, No. 8.

V. Rozanov, "Katkov kak gosudarstvennyi chelovek," *Literaturnye ocherki*, St. Petersburg, 1899 (not available to this writer).

R. I. Sementkovsky, *Katkov, ego zhizn i literaturnaya deyatelnost*, St. Petersburg, 1892.

P. Shchegolev, "Katkov, Valuev i Timashev," *Golos Minuvshogo*, 1914, No. 4.

D. D. Yazykov, "Obzor zhizni i trudov umershih russkikh pisatelei," vyp. 7 of *Bibliograficheskie zapiski*, 1892, No. 2.

Pan-Slavist propaganda. His rôle in arousing Russian public opinion during the Polish Rebellion of 1863 and the Balkan crisis of 1875-1878 has been frequently commented upon by historians.² Yet, a closer examination of the period of Alexander II shows very clearly that his influence extended far beyond the narrow circle of the rabid chauvinists and Pan-Slavists of the 1870's. From the middle 1860's on, he was a powerful figure in government circles, and not only in matters of Russian "national honor" and international position.³ And though by no means very progressive or radical, he advocated policies which could have initiated a moderate and controlled liberalism in Russian economic and social life.

Two periods in the life and activity of Katkov, the beginning and the very end of his career, have been emphasized, although they were not the most characteristic for his over-all political views and rôle. In the 1840's, when he was a student, Katkov belonged to the "liberal" intellectual circles, in which, however, he never became very prominent. He was closer to the Westerners than to the Slavophiles, whose dreamy historical idealism he scorned. He studied in Berlin where he listened to Schelling and came under his influence. When he returned to Russia, he became the leading exponent of Schelling's philosophy and embarked upon a promising academic career with a study of the Russian grammar and a lectureship at the University of Moscow. But this first, academic, stage closed when he took over the journal of the University of Moscow (*Russkii Vestnik*) in 1856 and almost immediately showed his gifts as a journalistic polemist. And the newspaper he founded in 1863 (*Moskovskie Vedomosti*) rapidly became one of the most widely read and vocal dailies in Russia.

In the last years of his life, shocked by the assassination of Alexander II (March 1, 1881), Katkov used the influential position he had gained through his paper to undo the work of reform accomplished under Alexander II, reforms he at first had supported sincerely, though with reservations. In this anti-liberal and reactionary furor he forgot all restraint and reasonableness. It was also during these years that he gave free rein to his virulent and narrow nationalism,

²Cf. for example B. H. Sumner, *Russia and the Balkans*, Oxford, 1937; Irene Gruening, *Die russische öffentliche Meinung und ihre Stellung zu den Grossmächten 1878-1894*, Osteuropäische Forschungen, Neue Folge Band 3, Berlin and Königsberg in Preussen, 1929.

³See General D. A. Miliutin's bitter resentment at Katkov's influence in *Dneonik D. A. Miliutina, 1873-1875*, vol. I, Moscow, 1947, pp. 110ff.

pursuing with implacable hatred the national minorities of the Russian Empire and advocating a racial and religious chauvinism unparalleled in Russia before. Unfortunately, these policies were followed by Pobedonostsev and Alexander III. In this way Katkov inspired the fateful attempt at setting back the clock of history and restoring at the close of the nineteenth century conditions which had prevailed in the eighteenth. But in so doing he lost his popularity with the public, and his influence became limited to a handful of inveterate reactionaries, the forerunners of the Union of the Russian People and the Black Hundred.

Between these two periods, for about twenty-five years, he was the perceptive echo of every event and the sounding board for many of the most vital and interesting ideas that agitated the Russian public. The study of this quarter of a century of his career helps us to understand more fully the implications and rich potentialities of the reform period of Alexander II, a period, it seems pretty clear today, which might have planted the seeds of a truly western and progressive Russia. Therefore, it is fruitful to examine the political ideas of Katkov as an example of the attitudes of someone who was important in shaping public opinion in that period.

The scope of the present analysis is, of necessity, very limited. Chronologically we shall deal only with this productive and influential period of Katkov's career, i.e., from 1863 to 1881. But even there we must limit ourselves. Keenly aware of all happenings in Russia, Katkov in his writings covered a very wide range. He recorded every movement in Russian public opinion, whether he approved of it or not, like a sensitive seismograph. He had something to say on almost every aspect of Russian public life—Emancipation, economic conditions, administrative changes, foreign affairs, intellectual and artistic trends. And on these he spoke out in a pungent, acid, and emotional manner in his daily editorials for the *Moskovskie Vedomosti*. To describe and analyse his views on all these subjects would take a volume. Inasmuch as the Emancipation had not solved the agrarian question, leaving the fate of the peasant as Russia's central issue, Katkov's attitude towards the rural problem is perhaps a most convenient issue on which to focus an exposition of his political and economic attitudes. One more word of warning: Katkov was a journalist, reacting rapidly and acutely to every event. He did not have the time or genuine desire to think through the theoretical implications of his opinions; therefore, in his case we cannot expect a logical and perfectly consistent ideology. Yet,

behind his emotional outbursts and in spite of his contradictions, one can discern a pattern of attitudes towards Russia's political, economic, and social problems.

In spite of his Russian nationalism, Katkov always looked towards England for guidance in economic and political matters; his Anglo-mania was proverbial among his contemporaries. In politics, his model was pre-Reform England, before its rapid evolution towards more liberal, democratic forms. Unlike young Disraeli (with whose ideas he had much in common), Katkov did not understand the direction and the flexibility of English historical developments in the nineteenth century. As with the British conservatives of the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the starting point of his political thinking was respect for existing institutions, a recognition of the right of prescription. "Russia cannot wish for improvised and manufactured institutions. . . . Everything manufactured, everything that does not derive directly from the desires and needs of life itself does more harm than good. To begin the study of the desires and needs of the country there is no need to create some new institutions *ad hoc*. We can begin with what already is."⁴ In the second place, applying Schelling's concepts and following Slavophile teachings, Katkov desired a harmony between the classes of the nation and the throne. There should be no conflicts and divisions between classes, for each had its own rôle which should be sufficient ground for social harmony. "Nothing pleases us more," he wrote, "than the signs of friendly relations and solidarity of interests among peasants and noble landowners—and this in spite of their confused accounts."⁵ For this reason Katkov opposed the proposal that the Zemstva institutions be sub-divided according to estates.⁶ A kindly mediator and fatherly protector of all, the Tsar should be above these classes and harmonious groups. "The throne has been raised so that the differences between estates, guilds, groups, and classes are levelled beneath it. . . . A single power and none other in the land, a people of 100 millions obedient to this power alone, such is a true Empire."⁷ Thus, the Tsar was the personification of the unity of the fatherland.

In Katkov's opinion, classes were not closed castes; they should

⁴M. N. Katkov, *Sobranie peredovykh statei Moskovskikh Vedomostei 1863-1887*, 24 vols., Moscow, 1898 (hereafter referred to as *K.*), 1863, No. 200, p. 539.

⁵*K.*, 1864, No. 51, p. 138.

⁶*K.*, 1863, No. 219, p. 590.

⁷*K.*, 1881, No. 114B, p. 205.

be open to everyone. "But when at the wave of the Liberator's hand the chains of serfdom fell, everything which had separated the nobility from the people also disappeared. Now, the nobles merely march in the first rank of the nation."⁸ "The nobility still exists as a separate organization," he continued, "but it is open to entry by new elements. . . ." As soon as anyone would show, by his work and achievement, that he belonged to another class than his own, he ought to be admitted to it. As in England, the aristocracy should be open to merit and achievement.

But even with social mobility assured, there should be no political privileges on the basis of class distinction. Members of all classes ought to participate in the public life of the country; they should all be responsible citizens and civically alert. However, Katkov spoke primarily of civic duties, and he was far from advocating elected representation. Representative self-government meant a state within a state and led to the disintegration of authority.¹⁰ Katkov assigned no policy-making rôle to the classes of society, for he conceived their rôle as pre-eminently an advisory one, at most administrative on the lowest local level (for economic matters in the *Zemstva*). But, this was in part negated by his hatred of the bureaucracy, a hatred which he shared with all progressive groups of society (even including some government members).¹¹ One is somewhat at a loss to see what Katkov really wanted. How could a strong state power be exercised by a fatherly Tsar with the help of an advisory public opinion but without any bureaucracy? Even in later years he merely reaffirmed the necessity of a strong, non-bureaucratic, non-representative government. How that was to be accomplished remained a secret.

The basis for class distinction was private ownership of property. Everybody was equal from the legal and civic points of view. Since 1861, even the nobility was only a *primus inter pares*, exclusively by virtue of its vaster economic resources. Obviously, private property should also be the criterion for participation in political—or rather civic and administrative—life. "Universal experience shows," he wrote, "that the affairs of the land must rest

⁸K., 1874, No. 217.

⁹K., 1874, No. 9A, p. 31.

¹⁰Cf. K., 1881, No. 119, p. 213 and 1882, No. 130, p. 234.

¹¹Cf. K., 1874, No. 9A, p. 31 and Katkov's letter to P. A. Valuev, 2 Dec. 1863, in "Pisma M. N. Katkova k P. A. Valuevu" (A. Kizevvetter, editor), *Russkii Istoricheskii Arkhiv*, Sbornik 1, Prague, 1929, p. 295.

in the hands of the owners, so situated that they can be representative of all estates."¹² Again using England as an example, Katkov believed that only those who had something to preserve and take care of were fit to participate in governing the destiny of the community. "The main basis for local organization should be the possession of land, and, in general, the character of the property held."¹³ In rural areas, ownership of land was to be the criterion of participation in the local institutions which provided the bond between the nation and the throne. These property owners ought to be entrusted with local justice and administration, like the Justices of the Peace in England. However, this did not have to lead to the introduction of the elective principle. "Self-government has the desirable characteristic if it is an organ of the same state power which also acts through the bureaucracy. That is why self-government can do without the elective principle, as we see in England where the Justices of the Peace are appointed by the Crown."¹⁴

As a corollary to this position, Katkov wanted administrative services performed by property owners without compensation, again like the English Justices of the Peace. "We do not take upon ourselves the impossible task of foretelling what will become of the Zemstva institutions. But there cannot be the slightest doubt that they will enjoy general respect only to the extent that their services will not be compensated."¹⁵ Absence of compensation was not only a condition for good local self-government, but also for the self-preservation of the educated classes in the coming struggle for political existence. Uncompensated Zemstvo service, Katkov repeated, was the landowner's principal weapon against the triumph of wild and blind democracy in local administrative institutions, a triumph which would subvert the very foundations of civilized society.¹⁶

The peasants, the most numerous group in Russia, must be full-fledged members of society; they must be free. The Emancipation in 1861 did not quite free them. They could not be truly free unless they owned property, and the Emancipation settlement subjected the peasant's land to the dominant control of the village commune, the *mir*. Incidentally, the terms of the Emancipation also impaired the civic equality of the peasant. The inalienability of land allot-

¹²K., 1863, No. 82, pp. 173-74.

¹³K., 1863, No. 218, pp. 588-89.

¹⁴K., 1864, No. 70-A, pp. 186-187.

¹⁵K., 1865, No. 37, pp. 96-7.

¹⁶K., 1865, No. 62.

ments, in conjunction with communal ownership, might still prove a harsher form of control than serfdom.¹⁷ Naturally, on this point, Katkov ran against heavy opposition from many quarters, for the illusions about the commune's function had not yet dissipated. In heated argument he accused the very architects of the Emancipation of pro-servile tendencies. He denounced progressives like Iurii Samarin, who "... are happy to enslave the peasants forever in communal land ownings, collective responsibility for taxes (*krugovaya poruka*), under the despotism of the mir assemblies and the so-called peasant self-government."¹⁸ The peasants had to obey the decisions of the majority of the mir, and it was well known that a small group of rowdies and hoodlums could impose its will on an entire commune. Such practices endangered the very foundations of the mir, and could lead to the intervention of the bureaucracy, and the final settlement between landowners and peasants would come under the direct control of the provincial authorities. This, under Russian conditions, would hardly be a blessing. Moreover, one might add, the mir was not a universally Slavic, or even an all-Russian institution; it was primarily a local phenomenon and thus could hardly provide a basis for the economic and social structure of the whole Russian Empire.¹⁹

Only individual enterprise and complete freedom to dispose of the fruits of one's labor could become the foundation for constructive and useful work. "Prince Vassilchikov is a thousand times right when he says that the main and most substantial gauge of all success in agriculture consists in the *personal work of the landowners themselves*" (Katkov's italics).²⁰ As long as the peasant in the commune did not own his land but possessed it only temporarily, his efficiency and individual enterprise would not be stimulated. Indeed, Katkov thought that the commune was the main cause for the peasant's inability to improve his economic and moral status and to participate fully in the administration and consultative functions of public opinion. Tied hand and foot by his dependency on the village authorities, the peasant, willy-nilly, had to live from day to day, deprived even of those advantages which Emancipation should have given him. "When the peasant tills the plot allotted to him, it is not for himself that he labors, but it is for the commune, which at

¹⁷K., 1865, No. 28, p. 74.

¹⁸K., 1864, No. 51, pp. 137-8.

¹⁹K., 1864, No. 56, pp. 150-51; 1863, No. 220, p. 592.

²⁰K., 1869, No. 153, p. 447.

the next redistribution will take away this plot worked by the sweat of his brow and give it to another, while he receives the strips another peasant has made useless."²¹ The peasant loses interest in his own future and goes to drown his sorrows in the tavern. Thus the latent energies and potentialities of the Russian peasant are dissipated.²² "Only dreamers who like to walk in half darkness . . . can pin their hopes on a compulsory introduction of communal plowing as a way of easing the burden of communal responsibility. Actually, this would have the reverse effect. Communal responsibility for taxes is unjust. It holds back progress . . . by preventing that 'free racing game' which is a necessary condition for success, not alone in the sciences and arts, but also in any industry."²³ The whole of Russia suffers from the evil consequences of the peasant's inability to better his lot, thus precluding the full development of the country's resources and energies.

It has been argued that the commune was a protection for the weak and unlucky. With this, however, Katkov disagreed violently; there was no room in the world for the weak and unlucky. Indeed, a whole nation or even a group, should not be retarded for the sake of a minority of weaklings. In the commune, the power was in the hands of the idlers and drunkards who merely wanted to profit from the labor of others.²⁴ Only energy and hard work could make a man and those who could not succeed were not worthy of living on dole. This was crude social Darwinism; the fittest survived and they alone were entitled to survive. If a peasant could not find a place in his village, he ought to be able to leave it and seek useful employment elsewhere; possibly he could go to the cities where the need for labor in the rising industries was great. Moreover, the government should foster resettlement and colonization, in order to bring into use the vast unproductive areas of the Russian Empire; this too would help increase Russia's economic wealth and make her independent of Europe.²⁵

²¹K., 1875, No. 176, p. 361.

²²K., 1875, No. 176, p. 362.

²³K., 1868, No. 189, p. 501.

²⁴"As in the case of drunkenness, [communal] resolutions on this question [rare and definite periods of redistribution] met serious opposition from bad farmers and idlers who at repartition time wish to receive good strips, fertilized by someone else's labor." K., 1874, No. 30, p. 80.

²⁵K., 1881, No. 111B, p. 199. We learn from his biographers that Katkov had very numerous and widespread interests in various important industrial, commercial, and financial enterprises. Some contemporaries even claim that he was not

Thus, only the active, energetic, successful, and willing would remain to work the land. For these alone, a group skilled and vitally interested in their craft, could play a productive rôle in the nation's economy. Katkov's incorrigible Anglomania again drew lessons from England's example: "The superiority of the agrarian system of England [a superiority which was already questioned in his time—M. R.] has its roots in the almost general custom of landowners to lease their lands to farmers. . . . Sooner or later, we too shall have to take this road; i.e., it will be necessary to break up the big estates into plots and lease them out to people who will choose agriculture as their trade and will not speculate on a wasteful exploitation of the soil."²⁶ In other words, put agriculture on the same rational and efficient basis as capitalistic enterprises in industry and commerce.²⁷

The reforms of 1861, Katkov felt, had been steps in the right direction. The task of the future was to implement them and carry them to their logical conclusions. The Emancipation Act included provisions for the full liberation of the peasant, his exit from the commune which should not be hampered. The redemption payments must be understood as the peasant's purchase of the right to dispose of his land freely, independently from the mir. By the same token, this would also give the peasantry an incentive to save, an incentive which was sadly lacking and without which an improvement of Russian agriculture could not be achieved.²⁸ Though still true to Schelling's concept of organic development, Katkov did not want to speed up the process artificially; he insisted upon removing the fetters placed on individual ownership by the Act of 1861. If we recall that the property owner was the foundation of society and of the political system, we can easily see the similarity between Katkov's views and Stolypin's famous "wager on the strong peasant" in 1906. True enough, after 1881 Katkov grasped at every straw to maintain the *status quo*, which he considered to be in imminent peril at the hands of the revolutionaries. And he showed some velleity of preserving the commune as a pillar of autocracy. However, even then,

averse to bribes from prominent captains of finance and industry to advocate their plans of economic policy in his papers. These allegations could not be checked by us, but they are so persistent as to make us believe that they may have some foundation.

²⁶K., 1869, No. 254, p. 758.

²⁷Only in truly extraordinary circumstances could charity become a form of individual help, as for example in the case of the Pavlovo village which burned to the ground accidentally. K., 1872, No. 186, pp. 476-77; 1872, No. 201, pp. 511-12.

²⁸K., 1865, No. 20, p. 53.

Katkov's defense of the commune was on purely political grounds and did not affect his basic premise that individual initiative and property were the only foundations of society.²⁹

We have seen that Katkov was a convinced individualist for whom social progress depended entirely on the energy and creative ability of man. "Only the movement which leads to the triumph of personal liberty can be considered progressive for the peasant's way of life . . ." he wrote in 1868.³⁰ This was best manifested in man's economic life; therefore, completely ruthless individualism (or in the American phrase—rugged individualism) ought to reign in it. Competition and the desire for improvements were excluded by the mir, hence the necessity of abolishing it. The argument that the abolition of the mir would create a landless proletariat with revolutionary leanings did not disturb Katkov too much. "The main barrier to the establishment of economic freedom in Russian agrarian society . . . is the fear of a proletariat. But in Russia, with our boundless area, this fear, we dare say, makes not the slightest sense. . . . However, it is true that in our rural way of life there is no elbow room for the good farmer who cannot get richer while remaining a peasant and continuing to till the soil."³¹ Therefore, the use of hired labor should be fostered, even in rural areas. And to bolster this point, Katkov used a typically capitalist argument in its favor: "The more hired labor is used in the economy, the better the conditions of agricultural laborers, on the basis of the general economic rule that the introduction of any new capital in agriculture has its effects on the raising of wages for farm labor."³² All this was prevented by the commune where unenergetic and unambitious peasants were holding back progress. Like swimmers in a whirlpool or fast current, the strong must pull loose from the weak, otherwise both will perish.

Katkov envisioned the rather easy abolition of the commune by a change in the fiscal system which bolstered it artificially. Once this outside compulsion was removed by a modern taxation system, the strong peasants would automatically seize control of the mir and bring about the "liquidation" of the commune.³³ He considered that the break-up of the commune was but one aspect of the change

²⁹K., 1881, No. 15B, pp. 35; 1881, No. 142.

³⁰K., 1868, No. 189, p. 502.

³¹K., 1865, No. 18, p. 47.

³²K., 1865, No. 18, p. 48.

³³K., 1871, No. 201, p. 606; 1865, No. 41, pp. 105-06; 1870, No. 220, p. 650; 1871, No. 139, p. 426; 1871, No. 201, p. 605.

taking place in the economic structure of the country. As the Western European states had done earlier, Russia was entering the path of industrialization and capitalism. This fact had to be accepted and the necessary implications drawn from it. There was no use in sentimentalizing a past that could not be revived or maintained against the stronger natural forces of an organic development.

Thus we see that Katkov wanted a modern, "liberal" (in the Manchesterian sense of the word) economic and social basis for Russia. Yet, as we have shown earlier, the political structure of the country was to remain quite "medieval"; in particular, the Tsar's autocratic power was not to be touched. Katkov's economic views, progressive for his time and country, could not be squared with his conservative and even reactionary political plans. Like so many of his Russian contemporaries, he did not see that his economic and social system, based on free enterprise and individualism, required an equivalent in the political realm (at least a *Rechtsstaat*). The liberation of the peasantry from the commune would not be complete as long as the police and the local nobility retained their political and social privileges.

Katkov was eager to get away from the old Moscovite concept of the service state, in which all individuals and classes of society existed only by virtue of the services they render to the state. He wanted to establish the Russian state, as in England, on the principle of individual activity and free enterprise. The state—in the person of the Tsar—would then play but a passive rôle in reconciling and circumscribing the areas between individual interests. Such a program would have resulted in West European political and economic liberalism. Yet, Katkov, fascinated by the historical rôle of the Russian state, an obsession in Russian political thought, refused to lessen the power and rôle of the Tsar. This made a reorganization of the government on an entirely new basis well-nigh impossible.

By these contradictory attitudes, Katkov exemplifies the tragic paradox of Russian political thinking in the nineteenth century. The advocates of liberty and individualism in the economic and social realms were, on the whole, defenders of a conservative and obsolescent political régime. On the other hand, the liberals and radicals in politics were, by and large, defenders of social collectivism and antiquated sentimental views in economics. The failure to correlate the political and economic concepts of their thinking led both radicals and conservatives into blind alleys from which the only issue seemed to be an elemental revolution.

Book Reviews

SCHWARZ, SOLOMON M. *The Jews in the Soviet Union*. Syracuse, N. Y., Syracuse University Press, 1951. 380 pp. \$5.00.

In the foreword to this book, Dr. Alvin Johnson, President Emeritus of the New School for Social Research, writes: "Under despotism, all citizens suffer the loss of freedom, but the members of minority groups suffer doubly, both individually and collectively." If this simple truth is not accepted up to now by some American "liberals" who continue to credit the Soviet dictatorship with a "solution of the problem of nationalities in the U.S.S.R.," this is only another proof of the vagueness and ambiguity of the term "liberal" nowadays. Dr. Schwarz's scholarly and objective book, based almost exclusively on Soviet documents and writings, shows what this "solution" is in reality. Officially it consists in the establishment of the sixteen Union Republics with numerous "Autonomous Republics" inside some of them. Each of these formations allegedly implements the principle of national self-determination and gives each nationality the possibility of developing its national culture. Unfortunately, this "national self-determination" exists only on paper. In reality the existence of the "unique and unified" All-Union Communist Party, ruled by its Central Committee, which, in turn, is ruled by its Politburo, which, in turn, is ruled by an omnipotent dictator, makes a mockery of the principles of national self-determination and of the right of the numerous different nationalities living in the Soviet Union to develop their na-

tional cultures. If Lenin's condemnation of any national culture as "clerical and bourgeois fraud" (*Complete Works*, vol. 19, p. 342, Moscow, 1948) has been officially replaced by a policy of toleration of these cultures under condition that they ought to be "national" only in form and "socialist" in content, the only real result of this change is that Communist propaganda in the Soviet Union is carried out not only in Russian but in all languages used there. To the Communists, writes Dr. Schwarz, "national self-determination was a matter of expediency rather than of principle," and the numerous data and facts contained in his book, and particularly in the chapter "Communist Doctrine on the National Problem," show that this is still the case. This assertion presents a particular interest now, when the Soviet government parades as the great defender of the national aspirations of the awakening peoples of Asia and Africa. The real significance of this defense was revealed by Stalin when he wrote: "We are in favor of the separation of India, Arabia, Egypt, Morocco, and the other colonies from the Entente, for the separation implies the liberation of these oppressed countries from imperialism, thus undermining the position of imperialism and strengthening the position of the revolution (Stalin, *Complete Works*, vol. 4, p. 372). It is well known that the current edition of the *Complete Works* does not contain those of Stalin's pronouncements which he considers "obsolete" or contradicting his present policy, and the reprinting of this article in 1947 is a

proof that it continues to represent Stalin's point of view.

The notion of national culture as "socialist in content and national in form" was developed by Stalin in his report to the Sixteenth Congress of the All-Union Communist Party. What is national culture under the Dictatorship of the Proletariat? It is, according to Stalin, "a culture socialist in content and national in form, the aim of which is to educate the masses in a spirit of internationalism and to consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat." (*Stalin, Marxism and the National and Colonial Question*) "It is possible to assume," Stalin wrote in the famous article "On Marxism and Linguistics," (June 20, 1950), "that our comrades do not understand the significance of the well-known Marxian formula that . . . cultures are socialist in content and national in form, that is, in language?" This is, in reality, the famous "solution of the problem of nationalities" in the U.S.S.R. The dictatorship allows the numerous nationalities of Soviet Russia to use their languages under the condition that they use them exclusively for the "consolidation of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat." And it is this "solution" which provokes the admiration of some "liberals" opposing it to the continuing "colonial oppression" of the Philippines by the United States and of India by Great Britain.

Dr. Schwarz shows what the "privileged position" of the Jews in Soviet Russia consists of in reality. If the notion of national culture for the other nationalities of the U.S.S.R. is confined to the right to glorify Stalin in their own languages, the Jews are deprived even of this "right." Such a thing as Jewish national culture simply does not exist

any more in the Soviet Union. After different zigzags dictated by the needs of Soviet foreign and internal policy, and particularly by the desire to appeal to the American Jews and to persuade them to send money for the "creation of a Jewish national home on Soviet soil (in Eastern Siberia), the Soviet government, finally, came, in Dr. Schwarz's words, to the "end of the road." This end is described in the book as follows: "The suppression of the last Jewish newspaper of any importance, the dissolution of the only noteworthy Jewish publishing house in the Soviet Union, and the impenetrable official silence on all matters of Jewish interest permit of only one interpretation. Sometime in 1948 it was decided to put an end to everything that could in any way stimulate or keep alive the national consciousness of Soviet Jews, so that they might ultimately disappear as a separate national group. Certainly Jews will continue to live in the Soviet Union, and Jewish religious congregations may even exist, but there will be no 'Jewry,' no Jewish nation, no Jewish community or culture."

Is this policy of complete destruction of Jewish national culture an expression of official anti-Semitism? Dr. Schwarz is inclined to deny such a connection, which does not mean that he denies the existence of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union. His book consists of two parts: "Soviet Minority Policy and the Jews" and "Anti-Semitism in the U.S.S.R." In the second part we find numerous facts showing that, contrary to the assertions of the Communists and their fellow-travelers, anti-Semitism is growing in the "Land of Socialism." If during the early period of Communist rule the authorities took different measures in order to fight

it (mainly because it was used as an ideological weapon by the extremists of Russian reaction), the present attitude of the Soviet government toward anti-Semitism is, at least, very ambiguous. There was a time, in the first half of the 30's, when anti-Semitism seemed to be in decline. Dr. Schwarz ascribes its resurgence to the purges of 1936-1938. The "old guard" which fell victim to this purge contained a considerable number of Jewish intellectuals and semi-intellectuals. It was quite natural that a continuous association of Jewish names belonging to high-ranking members of the hated Communist elite, with official accusations of espionage and treason, opened the way for a new rise of anti-Semitic feelings in the population. There are no proofs that all these men were liquidated by Stalin because of their Jewish origin. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that Stalin remained strangely passive in face of the recrudescence of anti-Semitism during and after the Moscow trials. The facts cited by Dr. Schwarz in the chapter "Decline of the Old and Rise of the New Anti-Semitism" under subtitles "Discrimination against Jews" and "Removal of Jews from Public Office" completely confirm, if not Stalin's and his principal lieutenants' active anti-Semitism, at least their unwillingness to irritate those elements of the population which fell under the influence of anti-Semitic propaganda. Then came the Hitler-Stalin Pact of 1939 after which, until Hitler's invasion in June, 1941, the Soviet government adopted officially an attitude of neutrality towards the Nazi ideology. ("Like any other ideology," proclaimed Molotov in his speech before the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. on October 31, 1939, "the

ideology of Hitlerism may be accepted or rejected—it is a matter of one's political views.") This neutrality could be interpreted only as permission to spread anti-Semitic propaganda. On the other hand, the Nazi propaganda in the Soviet regions occupied by Hitler after June, 1941, left a deep imprint on the population of these regions. There are many signs showing that anti-Semitism continues to poison Soviet life after the war. What is the attitude of the Soviet government to it?

Dr. Schwarz entitles the last chapter, in which he discusses this problem, "Postwar Contradictions," and, while he speaks of a "creeping anti-Semitism in the government" and of "stealthy advance of discrimination," he obviously hesitates to give a definite answer to the question: is Stalin's government anti-Semitic? The writer of this review is inclined to support this cautious approach. There can be, of course, no doubt, that no ideological or moral obstacles stand in the way of the Kremlin's anti-Semitism. It is also a matter of common knowledge that Stalin's most probable successor, Malenkov, is an avowed anti-Semite. The closing of some of the most important schools to the Jews, the almost complete elimination of Jews from Foreign Service, the removal of the Jewish population from some border regions, the famous anti-cosmopolitan campaign directed, by a strange coincidence, almost exclusively against Jewish writers and literary critics are, of course, bad omens. However, for the time being, it would be more cautious to speak rather of a gradual transition from *appeasement* of anti-Semitism to a *policy* of anti-Semitism. Will this development con-

tinue? Where will it stop? Let us not forget that Stalin is a faithful disciple of Lenin, and that he inherited from him the idea of the end justifying all means. The propaganda of unbridled xenophobia in the U.S.S.R. is a very important part of the Soviet preparations for war, and can be of great help not only in case of a shooting war (which seems to be rather improbable for the time being) but also for the maintenance of the Iron Curtain. If anti-Semitism, this fellow-traveler of xenophobia, is considered by Stalin and Malenkov useful in this respect, they will have no scruples in resorting to it.

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MEAD, MARGARET. *Soviet Attitudes Toward Authority*. New York, McGraw-Hill, 1951. 148 pp. \$4.00.

This book is a result of a year and a half of systematic research by a team of anthropologists and political scientists, headed by Margaret Mead under the auspices of the Rand Corporation, an institution largely financed by the United States Government. The group undertook "to examine contemporary Bolshevik character, which may be seen . . . in ideal if not in actual character, a particular variant of the traditional Great Russian character," and to form "reasonably accurate estimates of social and political conditions within the Soviet Union."

For apparent reasons it has been a difficult task. The anthropologists of the Western world cannot do research on the spot; they cannot in-

terview Russians living in the U.S.S.R. In the Soviet Union, books, periodicals, and motion pictures are screened by stringent censorship. They "provide no information on the extent to which those to whom [these materials] are addressed believe what they read or on the extent to which they act upon it." At the same time, the author largely discounts first-hand reports on Russia because of "the strength of feeling for or against the political system of the Soviet Union" among both political refugees and those foreigners who had an opportunity to live in the Soviet Union for a considerable length of time. Among hundreds of books studied by the researchers one would hardly discover a dozen of those written by ex-Soviet citizens who escaped from Russia and whose writings have not undergone Communist censorship.

The circumstances, it would seem, would prerequire a less ambitious task. But Miss Mead's group decided to go ahead with the project. They hoped to achieve their aims by applying methods suitable for the anthropological study of long-vanished primitive societies to the study of a complex nation of 200 million people. This reviewer feels that the undertaking was not a success. Frequent reservations and conclusions presented as hypotheses throughout the book would infer that Miss Mead might feel the same way.

An important misconception of the book is the dependence upon the so-called "traditional Russian character" as the core of much reasoning. But what is the traditional Russian character? For that matter, what could be said of the traditional character of, say, the Americans? Of course, certain general features

attributed (usually unfairly) to a nation might be discussed. For instance, Europeans have their views about the American habit of putting one's legs on tables, about American admiration for Coca-Cola and chewing gum; perhaps about the way advances in atomic research in this country influence U. S. foreign policy. But nobody would consider these features part of a serious study of the "traditional American character," even if they were to agree that such things do exist. Any modern civilized society, especially as composite and complex a society as that of the Soviet Union, renders any generalization, in Miss Mead's words, "necessarily bare, schematic, omitting the nuances of region and class and unable to do justice to the unique ways in which individual personalities express their culture." To quote a few of these generalizations:

"... [Great Russian character] developed individuals prone to extreme swings in mood from exhilaration to depression, hating confinement and authority, and yet feeling that strong external authority was necessary to keep their own violent impulses in check. . . . With little capacity to plan, work for, and execute a long series of steps toward a goal, the traditional Russian showed a large capacity to endure adverse conditions. . . ." Much of this seems dubitable indeed; a naive approach to "Russian characteristics," and certainly incorrect when applied to the Bolsheviks, who have shown great talent and capacity for planning, working for, and executing long series of steps towards a goal.

"... Among the intelligentsia, from whom the Party leadership was drawn, two trends in attitude to-

ward the peasants can be distinguished: one toward idealization of their potentialities and the other toward an impatience with their backwardness. The latter attitude of impatient hostility[?] toward the peasants, as being obstacles to the reconstruction of society, was expressed in endorsements of the harshness of the forced collectivization." To say that the Russian people "endorsed" the extermination of the peasants is as just as to say that the American people endorsed an extermination of the Japanese people by atomic bombs.

Highly tenuous, too, seems this statement: "... Parents in regard to children bear a closer resemblance to Stalin's relationship to every Soviet citizen, as their right to receive love and respect is as explicitly stated as their duty to preserve it. . . ." Certainly acceptance of such a sententious remark would involve literal belief in Soviet propaganda, as well as unquestioning faith in such a primitive generalization of the parent-child relationship.

A lengthy discussion of the so-called "Soviet ideology" is also a misconception of the book. Probably the confusion here lies in the lack of a clear definition as to whose ideology it is that is under discussion. If it is an ideology that the Soviet citizen is supposed by the Soviet rulers to hold, it is hardly worth studying, since Miss Mead herself owns to her "lack of knowledge between proportional relationship between the new ideal and the actuality." If under "Soviet ideology" one assumes the ideology of the devoted members of the Party it is another matter again. There are more materials available for study here, with the reservation, however, that no one knows how many Com-

munists are really devoted to the original doctrine of Marxism-Leninism, and how many are not. Again, even if one could depict the patterns of behaviour of an ideal Bolshevik, one should not forget that the *Realpolitik* of the Soviet government frequently forced Mr. Stalin and his associates to depart from these patterns.

Thus, the intended practical value of the book seems reduced to a minimum. Miss Mead's group could not be denied the honesty of an attempt to study contemporary Russia anthropologically "at a distance." In some places, where a subject discussed is a limited one and the author does not pretend to give a comprehensive answer to questions too wide to be answered, the book is brilliant. And possibly the work has its value as an illustration of methods of anthropological research.

Soviet Attitudes Toward Authority gives plenty of material to think about to those already acquainted with the subject. But least of all could it be accepted as a guide by those who want to gain practically applicable knowledge of Russia and the Russians.

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GERSCHENKRON, ALEXANDER. *A Dollar Index of Soviet Machinery Output, 1927/28 to 1937*. The Rand Corporation, Santa Monica, Calif., 1951. 357 pp.

In this monograph, Professor Gerschenkron, assisted by Alexander Erlich, presents the results of a massive investigation into Soviet industrial development. It covers the crucial decade between

1928 and 1937, and the group of industries which lay at the heart of the Soviet régime's forced-industrialization program. The study makes it clear that while the government was able to bring about a remarkable expansion in machinery output, official claims as to its precise dimensions are considerably exaggerated.

The book may be recommended for several types of readers. All economists and historians would profit from perusal of the 67-page text which discusses methodological problems and evaluates the results. All teachers and writers whose work touches on the U.S.S.R. will find it helpful to scan these pages and some of the nine appendices. For the small group of research scholars who require detailed Soviet data in their work, the well-organized presentation of carefully compiled output data for 315 items of machinery output will be extremely useful.

Professor Gerschenkron's discussion of the "index number problem" in relation to the historical process of industrialization is a substantial contribution to a very broad field. He shows several things: first, that measurement of growth from the standpoint of the beginning years overstates its extent; second, that use of a yardstick based on the situation at the end of the period will understate the extent of growth; and third, that the concept of a single-valued, "true" answer here has no meaning.

The index computed by Gerschenkron and Erlich shows a five-fold expansion in Soviet machinery output between 1928 and 1937. The Soviet index shows a fifteen-fold increase. Professor Gerschenkron points out that the computed index "in all likelihood underestimates somewhat the actual growth of machinery output

in Russia," and cautions the reader that it "is *not* a gauge by which Soviet indexes can be adjusted." Thus the author's results will be misused if publicists quote this study as proving that the "true" index for 1937 (with 1927/28 taken as 100), is 525 rather than 1509. Moreover, as indicated above, we have no basis for preferring any specific intermediate figure. The value of this study lies in its showing that no unique answer to so complicated a historical question is possible.

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OKUN, S. B. *The Russian-American Company*. Preface by R. J. Kerner. Translated by C. Ginsburg. Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1951. 311 pp. \$4.50.

The volume at hand merits translation primarily because it makes available to American scholars sources and facts otherwise inaccessible to them. Dr. R. J. Kerner, who contributed an excellent preface to the translation of S. B. Okun's monograph, rightly notes that "The greatest value of his work lies in the use for the first time of many scattered documents which . . . have heretofore remained undiscovered." This material illuminates many hitherto obscure phases of Russian activities in the North Pacific in the first half of the nineteenth century. Okun's work, therefore, is an important contribution to the history of the exploration, occupation, and exploitation of this area by all participating countries.

Starting with a survey of the early explorations by Russian traders and hunters, he describes the subsequent

phases of the Russian penetration eastward—the development of large trading organizations capable of outfitting expeditions and of maintaining trading posts along the coast of North America, the emergence of one company superior to all others in ambition, vision, and ability to deal with the government, its acquisition of a monopolistic, quasi-official status as the "chosen instrument" of official Russian policy in the North Pacific Basin, and its eventual failure to withstand the pressure of its more dynamic neighbors. Although Okun declares that it was not his purpose to examine the economic side of the activity of the Russian-American Company, he has, nevertheless, given a thorough, and, so far as this reviewer can judge, an accurate survey of the financial structure of the Company and the economic factors responsible for its rise and fall.

It is in the treatment of his main problem, that of examining "the expansion of Tsarist Russia in the Northern basin of the Pacific in the first half of the nineteenth century, a process carried on behind the screen of the Company," that he departs from methods of sound scholarship and attempts to fit facts into a ready-made Marxist frame of reference. Okun seeks to prove that Russian policy in the Pacific was the result of a long-range, carefully planned official program of aggression, expansion, and conquest. While there are indications that such ambitions existed both in government and commercial circles in Russia at the start of the nineteenth century, it is questionable whether any actual program was carried out in the manner conceived by Okun, who sees evidences of government planning and elaborate imperialism

in every merchant expedition and every utterance by a local official. Repeatedly, he fails to distinguish the private views and actions of Company and Government officials from official policy as such, and thereby he identifies the former with the latter. As a result, he seriously underestimates the rôle of local and individual initiative as an independent factor clashing on frequent occasions with the policy pursued by the government in St. Petersburg.

More glaring are the inaccuracies and omissions found in the section dealing with the second topic developed by Okun: the study of the "specific form of economic dependency created by the Russian-American Company in the territory it occupied, and endured by the Russian fur-hunters and by the indigenous population." Okun presents a graphic and well documented study of the abuse and exploitation of the native population by the Company. But in trying to make the most damning possible indictment of "Tsarist imperialism," he ignores the rôle played in the Russian colonies by the Russian missionaries, whose activities and achievements paralleled those of their Spanish neighbors to the South. The fact that the Spiritual Mission was supported by the Company places its activities within the scope of Okun's topic; the importance of the contributions of the Church to the well-being of the natives and the growth of the colonies transforms the omission into a serious defect which deprives the work of balance and objectivity.

In dealing with the work of a Soviet historian, the reviewer is always faced with the necessity of evaluating the effect of the ideological environment of the author upon

the scholarship of his work. The conformity to official doctrine noted here may have been the price paid by an honest scholar for the opportunity to engage in historical research. With it all, Okun made a substantial contribution to his field, although his is an isolated effort making little use of the numerous works of non-Russian scholars. The question of Russian colonial and foreign policy in the North Pacific awaits a more thorough and objective investigation which would utilize all available material, including the Sitka Archives, presently located in the National Archives, Washington, D. C., and in photographic copy in the University of California at Berkeley.

The quality of the translation, prepared by Dr. Carl Ginsburg under the auspices of the American Council of Learned Societies, is excellent.

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GORODETZKY, NADEJDA. *Saint Tikhon Zadonsky, Inspirer of Dostoevsky*. N. Y. Macmillan, 1952. 249 pp. \$4.50.

"And by the way, are there many who know about Tikhon Zadonsky? Why then should you not know of him?" Thus Dostoevsky in his *Diary* for 1876. Nadejda Gorodetzky, who gives the quotation, has set out to remedy this ignorance. The "sober and somewhat veiled figure of Tikhon" is presented in a careful analysis of his life, works, environment, and place in Russian thought. Born in 1724, of poor peasant stock, Tikhon was appointed bishop of Voronezh in 1763, resigned his charge in 1767, and died

in 1783 in the Zadonsk monastery to which he had retired. His canonization in 1861 was preceded by many years of popular veneration.

The personality that emerges from this study can perhaps best be described in negatives: Tikhon worked no miracles in his lifetime; he accomplished no high deeds of asceticism; left no outstanding work of doctrine; initiated no trends; was involved in no national events. Moreover, he lived in an age which, to the superficial glance at least, was barren of religious spirituality; he cannot stir the national consciousness like Sergius of Radonezh, or borrow radiance from famous disciples, as did the nineteenth century elders. Yet he touched Dostoevsky's imagination. A shadow of his spirit and style hovers round Zosima, in *The Brothers Karamazov*. His works were studied in the seminaries and thus helped to educate generations of Russian priests. His influence, "of a non-combative, non-spectacular type" may be dimmed nowadays, in an age which stresses the maximalism of the Russian character. But he represents what is best and mildest in Christian tradition: the living faith and love of an earnest spirit. "How do we know" writes Dostoevsky, "perhaps it is in fact Tikhon who represents our *positive* Russian type, which is so sought after in literature. . . ." (Letter to Maikov, March 25, 1870).

Nor is Tikhon without the traits that make a saint human. His often unavailing struggle against failings of temper, his love of children (which may have endeared him to Dostoevsky), his sorrow over the peasant's sufferings, his renunciation of possessions, and his unflagging charity, compose an affect-

ing portrait. It is that of a sensitive, wounded and melancholy soul, such as is revealed in the illustration facing page 23. Mrs. Gorodetzky, who quotes abundantly from his works, calls him the first "modern" Russian ecclesiastical writer, by reason of his familiar style, of his feeling for beauty, and of the insistence on personal feeling and a personal act of faith that link him with Western pietists. (The persuasive moderation of his approach, together with that quality of heart and expression which the French call "effusion," may also suggest the name of St. François de Sales.) Though Tikhon kept strictly within the limits of Orthodoxy, the utter sincerity of his faith and life cannot fail, concludes the author, to attract Christians of all traditions.

The name of Mrs. Gorodetzky has been associated for many years, both in France and England, with the religious revival which, in the Russian emigration, continues the idealistic movement of the early twentieth century. She has written several novels in Russian and French. The present book—an abridgment of a D. Phil. thesis—is her second work in English on aspects of spiritual thought in Russia. The first, *The Humiliated Christ in Modern Russian Thought*, had already devoted a few pages to Tikhon. These stressed the importance of Christ's self-abasement in Tikhon's meditations. The scope of the later book is narrower, its subject likely to interest chiefly specialists. It hardly lends itself to brilliancy of treatment or breadth of generalizations. But it seems to borrow its meticulous and unassuming qualities from the saint it depicts.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir:

It was brought to my attention that my article "The Lost Dostoevsky Manuscripts" which you published in the October, 1951, issue of *The Russian Review*, could create the impression that I am in possession of the originals of Dostoevsky's posthumous writings. It was not my intention to create this impression. As a matter of fact, I stated on pages 270-271 of my article: "His [Dostoevsky's] manuscripts, his pen and his snuffbox were placed under glass. The disquieting Dostoevsky manuscripts were stored away in locked archives. The Soviet State Publishing House [Gosizdat] had nationalized Dostoevsky's posthumous works. . . ."

The collection of the posthumous writings of Dostoevsky which I edited, and which were published by Piper, as I mentioned at the end of my article, contains exact information as to where the originals can be found. In my introduction to the first volume, I stated in *Dostojewsky am Roulette*, *Der unbekannte Dostojewsky*, and *Die Lebenserinnerungen der Gattin Dostojewskys* that the original documents are in the Moscow Historical Museum, in the Central Archives in Moscow, in the Academy of Sciences, and in the Pushkin House in Leningrad.

To clarify the point for your readers I want to state that what I bought from Gosizdat were the exclusive rights for first publication of hitherto unpublished Dostoevsky material. The fabulous sum which the Manz-Piper consortium put up was, of course, not paid for already published material. Since Soviet Russia was not a member of the Bern convention, which protected the European copyright, any book already published in Russia could be translated and reprinted outside Russia without any payment to the Russian State Publishing House. If some of the material which I acquired was published in Russia simultaneously with the German edition, this happened without my knowledge and in disregard of our agreement.

Sincerely yours,
/S/ René Fuelleop-Miller

May 4, 1952
Hanover, New Hampshire

ERRATA

1. Stanley Page, "Lenin: Prophet of World Revolution from the East," *The Russian Review*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (April 1952).

Page 73, lines 4 and 5 from the top of the page, omit the words "he stressed" to read: "Even if no important revolutionary events were forthcoming from the European war, there was that long-range Achilles heel of capitalism, the effects of imperialism upon the subject peoples of the world's colonies."

2. Samuel Kucherov, "The Case of Vera Zasulich," *The Russian Review*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (April 1952).

Page 95, footnote 18, erroneous. *Sudebnaya Palata* was the court of second instance, the appellate court; it had no connection with the Senate or any of its benches. This error was not the author's, but crept in, in the course of the editing of the MS.

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